United Nations A/64/164

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 July 2009

Original: English

Sixty-fourth session
Items 60 (a) and 64 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Operational activities for development: operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Advancement of women

Activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, prepared pursuant to Assembly resolution 39/125.

* A/64/150.

09-42116 (E) 100809

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Summary

The present report provides a review and update of progress of the programme and activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) as framed in its strategic plan, 2008-2011. The report tracks overall progress and highlights concrete results of the support that UNIFEM provided to countries in 2008. The report concludes with a set of recommendations on the ways in which the development effectiveness and organizational effectiveness of UNIFEM can be further strengthened.

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I. Introduction

1. The overall goal of the strategic plan, 2008-2011, of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (DP/2007/45), approved by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) in September 2007, is to support countries in implementing commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in line with their national priorities. UNIFEM works in partnership with Governments, civil society and United Nations organizations to strengthen women's economic security and rights, end violence against women, reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among girls and women and advance gender justice in democratic governance, including in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries.

2. The strategic plan comprises the elements of the UNIFEM accountability framework, against which UNIFEM measures: (a) its contributions to progress on gender equality at the national, regional and global levels, on the basis of the outcomes, outputs and corresponding indicators in its development results framework; (b) its performance, on the basis of the outputs, indicators and targets in its managing for results framework; and (c) its progress towards mobilizing, allocating and expending the financial resources required to implement its programme, as laid out in its integrated resources framework.

3. The present report covers the first year of implementation of the UNIFEM strategic plan, 2008-2011.

II. Context

4. In the past 30 years, far-reaching commitments to advance gender equality and women's empowerment have been agreed at the global, regional and national levels. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals continue to serve as relevant normative frameworks, along with notable new commitments made in 2008, including Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), which deals with the issue of women and sexual violence, General Assembly resolution 63/155, on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development (resolution 63/239, annex), as well as new regional agreements, such as the Protocol on Gender and Development of the Southern Africa Development Community. Effective implementation is central to ensuring that agreements are converted into concrete, measurable progress for women and girls.

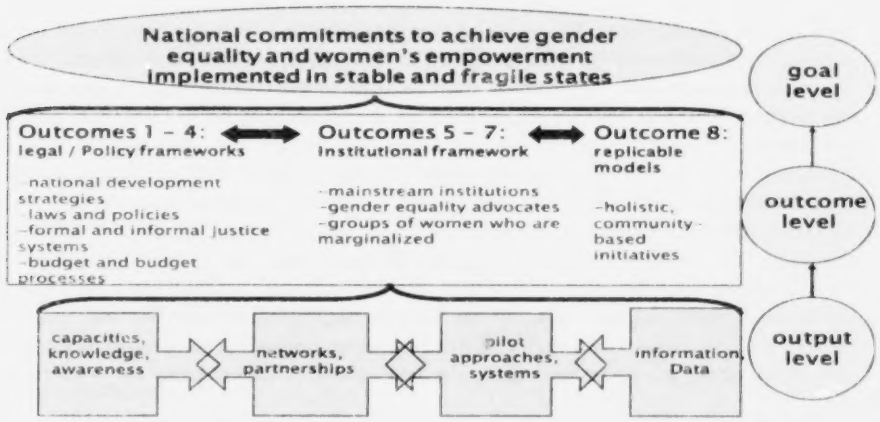
5. UNIFEM efforts to catalyse and provide technical support for implementing national, regional and global commitments to gender equality are being deployed in a context of internal and external change. The launch of the strategic plan, 2008-2011, and of the fourth edition of *Progress of the World's Women*; inter-agency planning for the Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women"; and the intensifying inter-agency and intergovernmental discussions about the architecture that supports gender-equality programming and policy in the United Nations, are all dynamics that offer new opportunities. At the same time, the reverberations of the worldwide financial and economic crisis — particularly for

those who are most excluded — the preparations for and outcomes of the Third High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, and the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, present a challenging environment for securing the resources and support needed to advance gender equality.

III. Development results framework

6. The development results framework contains eight outcome-level results that together represent a holistic effort to support countries in progressing towards the implementation of commitments to gender equality. The UNIFEM results framework is based on the Fund's experience to the effect that, while entry points may vary, a holistic approach to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment requires supporting change simultaneously at the macro, meso and micro levels. In that regard, UNIFEM supports partners in enhancing the gender responsiveness of the normative environment and of mainstream institutions to support the implementation of commitments; gender equality advocates in building the capacity and knowledge to support intensified action and accountability; and innovative pilot programmes to generate credible evidence of effective work at the micro level to inspire replication and upscaling. Figure I illustrates the results logic that drives UNIFEM efforts.

Figure I
Development results logic



7. The section that follows describes progress towards results achieved at three levels: (a) macro-level changes in the gender responsiveness of national development strategies, policies and laws and budget processes (outcomes 1-4); (b) meso-level changes in the capacities of gender-equality advocates, excluded groups and mainstream institutions (outcomes 5-7); and (c) changes at the community level (outcome 8). In each of those areas, UNIFEM works on four cross-cutting themes: (a) enhancing women's economic security and rights; (b) ending violence against women; (c) reducing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women

and girls; and (d) advancing gender justice in democratic governance. UNIFEM is reporting thematically in response to a finding from the evaluation of its multi-year funding framework, 2004-2007, that staff and partners find it easier to understand the cycle of change through thematic reporting. It is also important to note that, while the strategic plan was launched in January 2008, a large number of the results reported were generated through programmes and partnerships established during the previous multi-year funding framework and continue under the strategic plan.

A. Enhancing women's economic security and rights

8. UNIFEM supports efforts to enhance women's economic security and rights through programmes that strengthen the gender-equality dimensions of macroeconomic policies, including national development frameworks; increase financing of gender-equality commitments in strategies relating to poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals; and enable women to enhance their rights in specific sectors of the formal and informal economy and to have equitable access to productive assets. UNIFEM was active in this thematic area in 71 of the 82 countries to which it directed support in 2008.

9. In this thematic area, UNIFEM worked with Government partners — including ministries of finance, planning and labour and national women's machineries — networks of economists, women's non-governmental organizations and excluded groups of women (migrant workers, home-based workers, rural women) and United Nations country teams to incorporate gender equality and women's empowerment in the development, implementation and monitoring of 20 national, regional and global development strategies (from poverty reduction strategies to regional trade agreements); support agreement on 15 laws or policies related to women's economic security and rights;[1] provide greater access to legal assistance for women to enhance their economic rights in seven countries;[2] and build capacity to institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting in 32 countries.

10. Working with many United Nations partners — most often with UNDP — UNIFEM supported national partners to strengthen the gender-equality commitments contained in 7 approved poverty reduction strategies[3] and 12 newly adopted or revised national development strategies or other policy frameworks.[4] In Liberia, for example, UNIFEM provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Gender for the finalization of the national gender policy and action plan. Subsequently, as the convener of the gender theme group, it led United Nations system efforts in supporting national partners to mainstream the plan into the poverty reduction strategy and ensured the inclusion of gender-equality advocates. The four pillars of the poverty reduction strategy integrate gender equality priorities, which are in harmony with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to women's rights in

[1] Support was provided to Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Montenegro, Nepal, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan and Kosovo (as defined by the Security Council in its resolution 1244 (1999)) and the subregion of West Africa.

[2] Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines and Tajikistan.

[3] In Afghanistan, Burundi, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Honduras, Liberia and Rwanda.

[4] In Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, and in West Africa.

Africa and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

11. In partnership with the European Commission and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO),[5] UNIFEM produced a series of analytical papers on the links between aid effectiveness that were disseminated at the High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, the analysis contributed to the Government's undertaking to strengthen systems for the gender-sensitive monitoring of national development plans; costing gender-equality priorities; and introducing gender-responsive budgeting as part of the reform of the public financial management system.

12. In 2008, UNIFEM supported legal and policy reform on women's labour in Afghanistan (labour code), China (local domestic labour protection law), Montenegro (labour law) and the Republic of Moldova (National Action Plan on employment), as well as regional programmes focused on advancing the rights of home-based workers in Asia, and in Asia and the Arab States focused on the rights of migrant women workers. In Tajikistan, UNIFEM support since 2004 has contributed to the development of an "engendered" land-reform strategy.

13. UNIFEM has supported gender-responsive budgeting initiatives since 1997, and in 2008 it continued to provide such support in 45 countries. In 32 of these, the results included an increase in the number of budget processes incorporating gender equality. Ministries of finance in 16 UNIFEM-supported countries[6] issued or reissued guidelines on gender-responsive budgeting, which was also incorporated into sector and local budget processes in 17 countries;[7] and monitoring mechanisms to track progress in gender-responsive budgeting initiatives were launched by civil society and Government partners in 14 countries.[8]

14. Gender-responsive budgeting efforts in Morocco have progressed since UNIFEM extended its initial support in 2001. In 2008, the programme budgets of the ministries of health, employment, finance, literacy and vocational training of Morocco included gender-equality targets and indicators. In addition, the annual gender report that accompanies the finance bill has become a multi-stakeholder monitoring tool to assess the degree to which gender equality is addressed through public expenditure policies. The number of technical departments involved in preparing the gender report increased from 4 in 2006 to 21 in 2008.

15. Gender-responsive budgeting initiatives at the local level can have a direct, positive impact. In Rosario, Argentina, the number of gender-equality projects in the participatory budget process increased from 14 in 2007, representing a budget of 742,448 Argentine pesos, to 24 in 2008, with a total budget of over 3 million Argentine pesos.

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[5] Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace (www.gendermatters.en).

[6] Afghanistan, Armenia, Burundi, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, India, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

[7] Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Honduras, Indonesia, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

[8] Afghanistan, Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Nicaragua, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal and Uruguay.

16. Supporting the sustainable capacities of gender-equality advocates and mainstream institutions to advocate for, monitor and/or implement gender-equality commitments relating to women's economic security and rights is critical to progress in this area. In 2008, UNIFEM helped position national women's machineries to strengthen the formulation, implementation and monitoring of Government commitments in 13 decision-making forums;[9] and to position 13 networks of excluded groups of women, who advocated effectively for decision maker accountability on women's rights;[10] and contributed to changes in performance in 17 mainstream institutions, including increased budgets for gender equality in four countries and increased availability of sex-disaggregated data in 12 countries/regions[11] through support to national statistics offices.

17. When they form strong partnerships across governmental institutions, national women's mechanisms can be effective in ensuring that national commitments are followed through. For example, in Cambodia such a mechanism co-chairs the Inter-ministerial Task Force on Migration, which developed contracts for domestic workers and national guidelines to protect overseas migrant workers. In Mexico, the women's machinery, the National Institute of Social Development and academic institutions are partners in a gender and poverty observatory, using qualitative and quantitative information on women's poverty to follow up on Government commitments to gender equality.

18. UNIFEM supported specific groups of economically excluded women in strengthening their organizing efforts, including migrant women workers in Asia; rural women in the Commonwealth of Independent States, North Africa and the Caribbean; and home-based workers in Asia. In Bangladesh, the advocacy efforts of migrant women workers resulted in the establishment of a coordination committee on safe migration for women within the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment. UNIFEM also supported rural women in seven countries[12] in advocating for their right to land.

19. UNIFEM works with policy, service delivery and media institutions to create enabling environments that promote and protect women's economic security and rights. With respect to statistics bureaux, important advances were made to promote specific sections and questions in household surveys related to time use and unpaid work, resulting in more relevant employment questionnaires in Honduras, Mexico, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Uruguay. In Cameroon, UNIFEM work with the European Commission on aid effectiveness led to a partnership to strengthen the gender-equality dimensions of the Commission's road infrastructure programme.

20. UNIFEM partners with mainstream development actors to identify promising pilot initiatives that can demonstrate innovative approaches to enhancing women's economic security and market opportunities, and increasingly invests in rigorous

[9] Decision-making forums in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Nicaragua, the United Republic of Tanzania and Tajikistan, and a regional forum in Central America.

[10] In Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Mexico, Nepal and Pakistan, and at the regional level in Latin America and the Caribbean.

[11] In Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Indonesia, Mexico, Senegal, the Republic of Moldova and Uruguay, and in Central America, South Asia and West Africa.

[12] Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Suriname and Tajikistan.

evaluation to generate learning that supports upscaling or replication by national, regional or international partners. In 2008, UNIFEM invested in six community-level initiatives to enhance women's economic security. These included the partnership between UNIFEM, the World Bank and the International Centre for Research on Women in a pilot programme of results-based initiatives in Cambodia, Egypt, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia and Peru that began in 2006. The initiatives are designed to identify proven, "quick-win" interventions that enhance women's economic security and rights and incorporate a strong evaluation component in the programme design.

B. Ending violence against women

21. UNIFEM supports partners in ending violence against women through assistance in aligning national and local laws, policies and programmes with international and regional human rights commitments; implementing multisectoral national strategies to address violence against women, including services to protect and promote women's human rights; developing effective prevention approaches, especially through work with men, boys and adolescents; and undertaking advocacy and communication initiatives that lead to changed attitudes and behaviour. UNIFEM administers, on behalf of the United Nations system, the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, as designated by the General Assembly in 1995 (see resolution 50/166). UNIFEM was active in this thematic area in 56 of the 82 countries to which it directed support in 2008.

22. With an increasing number of countries agreeing to national laws, policies and strategies related to ending violence against women, it is critical that these agreements be reflected in mainstream national strategies and budgets. UNIFEM supported partners in successfully advocating for the inclusion of commitments to end violence against women in national development and poverty reduction strategies in five countries in 2008;[13] drafting, consulting on and adopting eight laws[14] and seven policies[15] to address multiple forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, trafficking and female genital mutilation in 15 countries. It supported efforts to end impunity for violations of women's rights that resulted in reforms to justice systems in Argentina, Burundi, Ecuador and Rwanda. Gender-responsive budgeting processes have led to the inclusion of specific lines to address violence against women in the national budgets of Burundi and Ghana; in local budgets in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Honduras; and in the Ministry of Health of Ecuador for specific activities to eradicate and prevent gender-based violence in conflict zones.

23. Women's ministries and women's non-governmental organization networks are at the forefront of efforts to put violence against women on the policy agenda and to expand State accountability and support. The long-term support of UNIFEM for the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Afghanistan contributed to its ability to secure agreement on a national plan of action for women in 2006 and to lead a 14-member

[13] Afghanistan, Burundi, Ecuador, Liberia and Rwanda.

[14] In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Jordan and Mexico.

[15] In Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Mozambique, Rwanda and Somalia, and at the regional level in Africa.

inter-ministerial commission to end violence against women. Those preparatory activities strengthened the capacity of gender-equality advocates to make a strong case for the inclusion of specific priorities to end violence against women in the 2008 Afghan national development strategy.

24. Enhancing the capacities of decision makers in formal and informal justice systems to deliver justice for women in efforts to end violence against women is a key focus area in the UNIFEM strategic plan. In 2008, this included providing financial and technical support to expand the legal assistance available to women in 11 countries and increasing the knowledge of judicial decision makers in 6 countries. In Burundi, for example, the Bashingantahe, a traditional institution for conflict resolution and reconciliation formerly reserved for men, has been transformed so that women can combat gender-based violence and other violations of women's human rights. Today, 45 per cent of the members of the national committee are women, as are more than 30 per cent of the members of the decentralized committees.

25. UNIFEM works to support and expand efforts in the area of advocacy, policy influence and political space and the capacities of gender-equality advocates with a view to bringing an end to violence against women. In 2008, UNIFEM supported efforts in five countries or territories[16] — and at the regional level in West Africa — to strengthen their ability to monitor the implementation of commitments. UNIFEM provided support to seven institutions — including police and military and judicial systems — to enhance their performance with regard to ending violence against women;[17] and to statistics bureaux in four countries[18] to collect and/or analyse data.

26. UNIFEM supported capacity-building efforts in 18 institutions, including for police and military officers in 12 countries. The Rwandan Defence Forces and the national police have adopted a comprehensive approach to institutionalize work to end violence against women. The Defence Forces issued the Kigali Declaration, which calls for increased recruitment of women in peacekeeping operations; comprehensive training for all troops; and a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse. The Forces established a gender desk in 2008, with UNIFEM support, through which officers have conducted training for close to 5,000 military personnel and civilians in three of the five provinces of Rwanda, and integrated modules into the training curriculum for cadet schools. The national police adopted Rwandan Defence Forces training manuals for its entire staff. The Forces have a toll-free phone hotline for rapid response, and a leading telecommunications company, MTN, provides free support. Burundi, Liberia, the Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania have also benefited from South-South exchanges of experience with Rwanda.

27. At the community level in 2008, UNIFEM and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) together expanded a programme that was originally supported by the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, by helping women's networks to create "safe cities". The aim of that cross-regional initiative is to refine and rigorously evaluate a

[16] Albania, India, Mexico, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Uruguay.

[17] The Ministry of Public Security of Burundi, the Ministry of Justice of Cambodia, three Haitian geographical departments, the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the police in the Sudan.

[18] Barbados, Burundi, Morocco and Rwanda.

model of how local authorities, working together with communities and women's organizations, can prevent violence against women and girls in public spaces. The longer-term intention is to promote the model for adaptation and upscaling by local governments. A methodological intervention model has been developed in the cities of Rosario, Argentina, Bogotá and Santiago, and new work proposals have been developed for Haiti and Brazil.

C. Halting the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls

28. To promote a coherent, gender-sensitive approach to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, UNIFEM works in collaboration with the United Nations system, national AIDS councils and civil society partners, prioritizing support to HIV-positive women's networks to advocate for gender-sensitive responses to the pandemic and to address interlinkages between HIV/AIDS and violence against women. UNIFEM was active in this thematic area in 13 of the 82 countries to which it directed support in 2008.

29. National AIDS plans are central planning tools that guide work in various sectors and behind which donors align their support. In 2008, working with Government, civil society and United Nations-system partners, UNIFEM supported the development of a gender-responsive HIV/AIDS strategy at the national level in Barbados; of policies in Nigeria; and of a regional strategy in the Caribbean. In Barbados, UNIFEM provided technical support for the development of the national strategic policy and action plan on HIV that was accepted by Parliament in 2008. The final policy incorporates strategic actions to support women's empowerment in prevention programmes.

30. At the global level, in June 2008 UNIFEM released its publication *Transforming the national AIDS response: mainstreaming gender equality and women's rights into the "Three Ones"*. It has been endorsed as a key tool for incorporating gender equality in national AIDS policies and plans by the World Bank, and has been used by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and UNDP. It forms part of the guidance of the World Bank AIDS Strategy and Action Plan service for evaluating HIV strategies and action plans at the country level.

31. HIV-positive women's groups are key partners in the quest to reach the Millennium Development Goal on HIV/AIDS, as they provide first-hand experience in shaping gender-responsive HIV/AIDS policies and programmes. In 2008, UNIFEM supported HIV-positive women's networks and groups in articulating an agenda and a call for Government action in Burundi, Ghana, India, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. UNIFEM also supported partners to enhance service delivery through mainstream institutions in India and Nigeria.

32. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, managed by UNIFEM on behalf of the United Nations system, invested in generating knowledge and capturing lessons that can promote replication and upscaling of successful models of intervention. Under the special "window" addressing the intersection of violence against women and HIV/AIDS, emphasis has been placed on ensuring the rigorous monitoring and evaluation of programmes addressing interlinkages in Botswana, the Dominican Republic, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Viet Nam. Those eight programmes, managed as a "knowledge cohort" within the Trust Fund, are guided by a common

set of learning questions and approaches to baseline data collection. The focus on facilitating learning between and independent evaluation of the programmes is designed to enable them to generate a cross-country evidence base offering insights into effective strategies to respond to the interlinkages between violence and HIV/AIDS.

D. Advancing gender justice in democratic governance

33. Good governance is recognized as an important component of aid effectiveness and sustainable peace. UNIFEM supports partners in building capacities and processes that enhance accountability through gender-responsive reforms in judicial, security and service-delivery institutions, as well as through engagement in oversight processes; and by increasing women's political participation and influence in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. UNIFEM was active in 70 countries in this thematic area, out of a total of 82 countries to which it directed support in 2008, expending 44 per cent of programmable funds.

34. In 2008, UNIFEM worked in partnership with national women's machineries, gender-equality advocates, United Nations country teams and Government partners to secure the incorporation of commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in the post-conflict strategies of five countries; support the passage of 27 laws or policies strengthening women's participation in democratic governance; support justice system reforms in five countries; and ensure that resource allocations are available for women in crisis and post-conflict situations through the consolidated appeals process.

35. UNIFEM supported national consultative processes to advocate for the inclusion of gender-equality priorities in the constitutions of Algeria, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, Egypt and Kosovo, finalized in 2008. In Ecuador, UNIFEM supported efforts that resulted in the inclusion of 95 per cent of women's demands in the 2008 Constitution, including the right of indigenous women to participate in ancestral justice processes.

36. In 2008, UNIFEM supported the passage of 15 laws[19] and 13 policies[20] to strengthen women's participation in democratic governance, and tracked the use of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as the basis for legal change in 23 countries — specifically, the use of the Committee's concluding comments in 15 countries, with support being provided to partnerships in four countries[21] for their implementation.

37. At the global level, the passage of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), which dealt with the issue of sexual violence in conflict, gave important impetus to the work of UNIFEM and its partners, particularly the United Nations agency collective United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. In partnership with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations Action and the

[19] In Afghanistan, Albania, Colombia, Egypt, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Morocco, Vanuatu and Viet Nam and in the Great Lakes region.

[20] In Cambodia, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Paraguay, the Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Serbia, Tunisia and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and at the regional level in Africa.

[21] The Plurinational State of Bolivia, Indonesia, Liberia and Viet Nam.

Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Canada, UNIFEM focused attention on the role of uniformed peacekeepers in preventing widespread and systematic sexual violence, treating it as a security challenge and, at a conference at Wilton Park, United Kingdom, bringing United Nations and African Union force commanders face to face with leading Security Council members to discuss appropriate security responses to sexual and gender-based violence in conflict. UNIFEM provided technical input for resolution 1820 (2008) by documenting practical actions undertaken by peacekeeping forces to combat sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and shared it with decision makers.[22]

38. In 2008, UNIFEM supported efforts to improve capacity in formal and informal justice systems to strengthen gender justice in Afghanistan, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burundi, Ecuador, Morocco and Viet Nam; provide human rights-based knowledge or training for judicial actors in 10 countries; and increase women's access to legal assistance in 9 countries.

39. UNIFEM supported capacity development initiatives to strengthen gender-equality advocates and mainstream institutions to advocate for, monitor and/or implement commitments to women, supporting key political parties to promote women's rights in six countries[23] and women's participation as candidates in six countries;[24] contributing to improved performance in 16 mainstream institutions; and increasing budgets for gender equality in 2 countries.

40. In 2008, the world celebrated unprecedented electoral returns for women in Rwanda, with 56.2 per cent of the members of Parliament being women. During the 2008 elections, most political parties had at least 50 per cent women candidates on their electoral lists. UNIFEM supported a three-day training course on electoral processes for 113 female representatives from all parties, covering manifesto development, competitive political discourse, laws, economic policies and confidence-building.

41. An analysis of the numbers of women participating in peace talks since the passage of resolution 1325 (2000) demonstrates that there has been little increase in their engagement as mediators, negotiators or observers. UNIFEM facilitated women's groups in developing common agendas to influence peace processes in Burundi, Darfur, Guatemala, Rwanda, the Sudan and Uganda and in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Uganda Women's Peace Coalition developed women's implementation protocols on key components of the peace agreement to advocate with the mediation secretariat, delegations from the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army on implementation protocols and the inclusion of women's priorities. The provision by UNIFEM of a gender adviser to the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas, in collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs, was an important strategy for expanding participation of gender-equality advocates and securing stronger commitments to women's rights.

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[22] The Analytical Inventory of Responses by Peacekeepers to War-Related Violence Against Women.

[23] Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, Nepal, Rwanda and Timor-Leste.

[24] Cambodia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Nepal, Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

42. In 2008, UNIFEM worked to support increased gender responsiveness in 22 mainstream institutions including a cross-section of Government ministries, electoral commissions, mechanisms for peace negotiations and transitional justice, universities, mainstream media and the private sector. An important outcome in Nigeria was the establishment, in partnership with UNDP, of an equal-opportunity committee within the Electoral Commission.

E. Gaps and challenges

43. While UNIFEM reporting in the first year of the strategic plan demonstrates significant areas of progress in contributing to national, regional and global priorities for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, it also reveals gaps and challenges, as set out below:

(a) The absence of agreed standards on what constitutes a national development strategy or plan that is "fully aligned" with gender-equality commitments makes it difficult to assess the extent of the results generated. In 2009, UNIFEM will consult with partners such as United Nations system organizations, relevant Government ministries, gender-equality networks and experts on this topic to improve internal standards/criteria for assessing strategies, and will support monitoring and the use of gender-responsive budgeting and other tools to promote budgets for implementation;

(b) Programme guidance is needed on engaging with public-sector reform efforts to strengthen their gender dimensions. The preparatory phase of a UNIFEM global programme on democratic governance and service delivery for women was completed in 2008 and will guide work in this area in 2009;

(c) Two processes over the next year may help address the deficit of women's participation in peace processes: the Secretary-General's report on implementing resolution 1820 (2008), and the forthcoming tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). UNIFEM is building partnerships and capacities to make the most of those opportunities;

(d) UNIFEM needs to invest in a rigorous, systematic evaluation of strategies that work to prevent, respond to and end impunity for violence against women. The Organization is building a knowledge-management platform to make accessible state-of-the-art information derived from global experts, as well as promising practices from UNIFEM programme experience. It is also working with the inter-agency Programme Appraisal Committee of the Trust Fund to strengthen its evaluation strategy and capacity.

IV. Management results framework

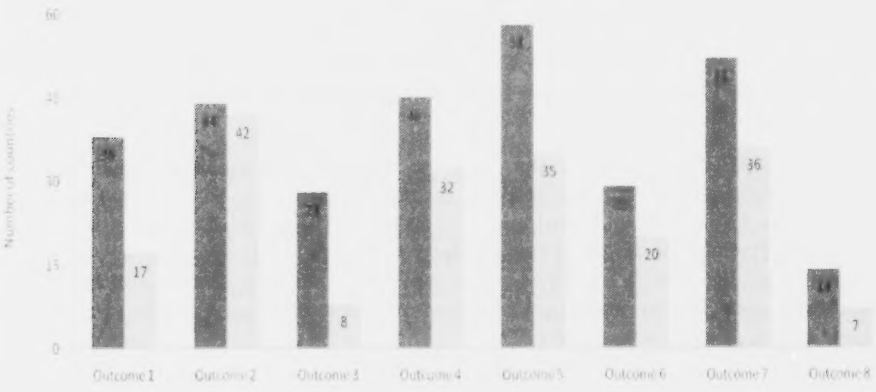
44. While demand exceeded its ability to respond in 2008, UNIFEM was able to respond to requests for programming and technical support in 82 countries. In all countries, UNIFEM support aligns with national development priorities and the overall programme framework of the United Nations country teams. However, the range of support that UNIFEM provides varies. In 42 of those countries, UNIFEM supports a relatively small programme, including where efforts in the country are linked to a broader regional or subregional programme designed to pilot innovation

across countries or regions. In 40 countries, UNIFEM supports multidimensional strategies with a broad range of partners and focuses on contributing to a range of interlinked outcomes related to national development priorities. Figure II tabulates UNIFEM support of country-level results according to the eight outcomes identified in the strategic plan, accompanied by the corresponding programmatic expenditures (see fig. III).

45. Figure II shows that UNIFEM provided the greatest support for interventions that build the capacity and influence of gender-equality advocates (outcomes 5 and 6), continuing a trend reported under the previous multi-year funding framework, 2004-2007. Much of the demand and many of the entry points are identified by gender-equality advocates, and increases in their capacity translate into achievements across other outcome areas. It is important to note the smaller investments in outcome 3 and outcome 8. Outcome 3 (enhancing the gender responsiveness of justice systems) is a new area of focus that UNIFEM is intensifying in this strategic plan period. Outcome 8 focuses UNIFEM support on select community-level initiatives that are expected to generate results over the course of the strategic plan. UNIFEM anticipates that investments in this outcome area will be small for the first two years, as it hones in on a select number of initiatives, and will grow significantly in the third and fourth years to reflect a higher investment in impact evaluation that can generate a credible evidence base of effective ways to advance gender equality.

Figure II

Number of programme countries where UNIFEM was able to respond to requests for support in 2008, by outcome

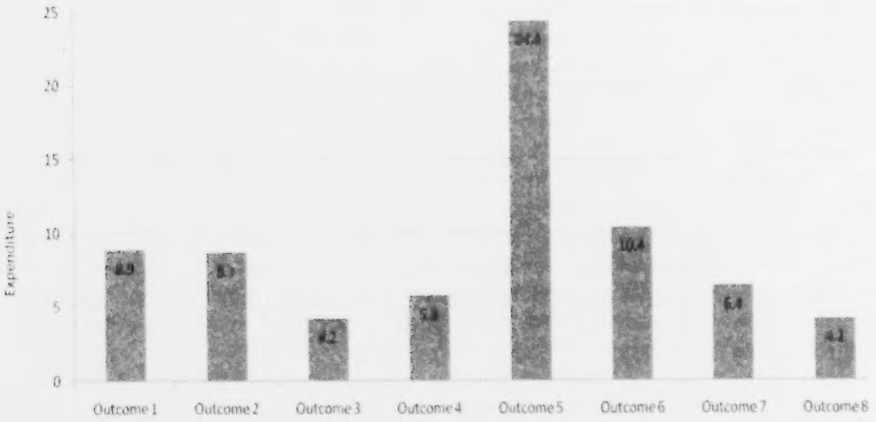


Key: black bars: programme countries where UNIFEM is providing support to achieve outcome; grey bars: countries where outcome has been achieved on at least one indicator.

Note: Outcome 1: increased numbers of national development strategies (including poverty reduction strategies, sector-wide approaches, post-conflict reconstruction strategies, and other nationally owned plans) incorporate gender equality in line with national commitments to the empowerment of women (such as the Millennium Development Goals) and human rights (the Convention, for example).

Outcome 2: increase in numbers of constitutions and legal frameworks and processes — particularly those related to economic security and rights, property and inheritance rights, trade, migration, ending violence against women and electoral and security sector reform — that promote and protect the human rights of women and eliminate gender inequality.
Outcome 3: greater numbers of formal and informal justice systems promote the human rights of women at national and local levels.
Outcome 4: increase in number of budget processes that incorporate gender equality.
Outcome 5: gender equality experts, advocates and their organizations and networks enhance their capacity and influence to ensure strong gender-equality dimensions in national laws, policies and strategies, including in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction processes.
Outcome 6: the most marginalized women (including, among others, HIV-positive women, women informal-sector workers, migrant women, indigenous women, women survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict situations and women with disabilities) have increased resources, capacities and voice to ensure that their priorities are included in relevant policies, programmes and budgets.
Outcome 7: key policy, service delivery and media institutions have increased resources and improved structures, procedures, incentives and capacities to implement laws and policies that promote and protect the human rights of women in line with global, regional and national agreements.
Outcome 8: community-level initiatives generate a greater number of effective models for advancing the human rights of women and eliminating gender inequality.

Figure III
Provisional 2008 programme expenditure distribution by outcome
(Millions of United States dollars)



46. The management results framework helps UNIFEM assess its performance in carrying out its mandate and the delivery of results. Unlike the development results framework — which contains both outcome- and output-level results — the management results framework comprises output-level results for which UNIFEM is wholly responsible. It consists of four areas: (a) policy advice and catalytic programming; (b) United Nations coordination and reform; (c) accountability, risk and oversight; and (d) administrative, human and financial capacities, for a total of 17 outputs and 58 indicators, against which UNIFEM tracks progress and gaps.

A. Area 1
Policy advice and catalytic programming

47. Outputs in this area track the extent to which UNIFEM advocacy, capacity development, technical support, catalytic programming, documentation and dissemination build on lessons learned to stimulate replication and upscaling.

48. Eight efforts to replicate or upscale UNIFEM-supported initiatives were tracked in 2008. They included a programme to reduce recidivism may male perpetrators in Grenada which has been replicated in six Caribbean countries; and documentation of the use of "mock sessions" to strengthen reporting on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which is being recognized by the Committee and which UNIFEM will continue to promote for replication by national, regional and multilateral partners.

49. UNIFEM registered significant progress in generating guidance through the drafting of the *Analytical Inventory of Responses by Peacekeepers to War-Related Violence Against Women* — a compendium of best practices by uniformed personnel for preventing sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings, compiled with Department of Peacekeeping Operations involvement on behalf of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which is recognized as a knowledge base of practical actions; the publication of the fourth edition of *Progress of the World's Women*, which is generating stronger interest in gender-responsive accountability; and the launch of an online help desk to support the collection and dissemination of proven practices for addressing violence against women.

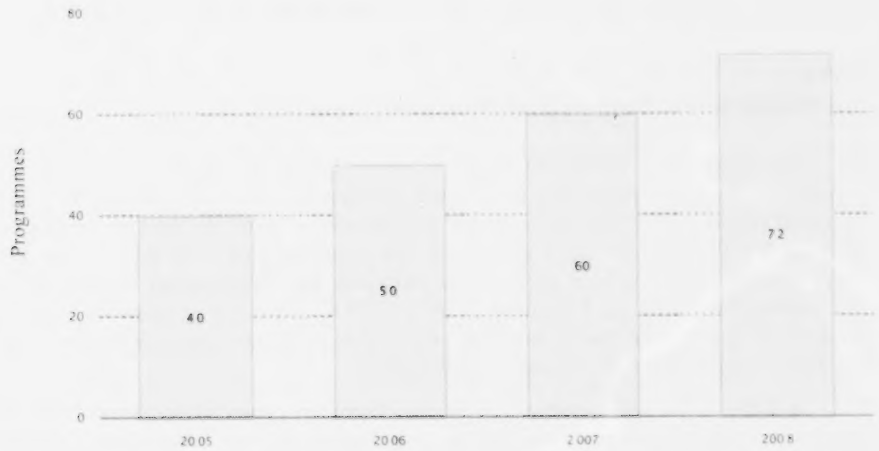
50. UNIFEM capacity to generate proven approaches depends on use of state-of-the-art evaluation practices that align with United Nations Evaluation Group standards. UNIFEM made good progress in this area, finalizing its evaluation strategy, 2008-2011, drafting an evaluation policy and designing gender-responsive evaluation training modules for dissemination in 2009. UNIFEM investment in strategic, high-quality evaluation will continue to grow during the strategic plan period with a view to enabling the Fund to present credible evidence on effective ways to ensure the implementation of commitments to gender equality. In 2008, a meta-evaluation was initiated to analyse 26 evaluations, 9 reviews and 8 assessments/reports conducted by UNIFEM between 2004 and 2008. Eight of these were considered evaluations according to United Nations Evaluation Group standards. One of them was rated "excellent", one "good", five "average" and one "poor". Further efforts to improve the quality of UNIFEM evaluations are a high priority for the organization.

B. Area 2
United Nations coordination and reform

51. In the context of the guidance provided by the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, issued in 2004 and reiterated in 2007, the General Assembly called upon the United Nations system to avail itself of the technical expertise of UNIFEM on gender issues, and encouraged UNIFEM to strengthen its efforts to provide strategic guidance to the United Nations system in the area of gender equality.

52. In 2008, UNIFEM reported expanded participation in United Nations coordination and reform processes at all levels. UNIFEM was engaged in 72 joint programmes, 54 as a participating agency and 18 as the lead agency. At the request of resident coordinators, UNIFEM participates in all of the One United Nations pilots and, in 2008 — in its role as Chair of the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality — collaborated with the Resident Coordinator in Viet Nam to convene gender-equality experts from all of the One United Nations pilots for stocktaking. UNIFEM took a leadership role in 32 gender theme groups at the global, regional and country levels; co-chaired an additional 19; and was an active team member in another 7. UNIFEM promoted attention to gender equality in 10 common country assessments/United Nations development assistance frameworks.

Figure IV
UNIFEM participation in joint programmes, 2005-2008



53. UNIFEM prioritized support to United Nations system-wide efforts, participating in the inter-agency task forces convened by the Deputy Secretary-General on gender equality in the context of system-wide coherence and the Secretary-General's "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" campaign and the rule-of-law working group; continuing its stewardship of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women and hosting the secretariat of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict; and co-chairing the working group on programming issues for the United Nations Development Group and participating in the Group's expert teams, including on training resident coordinators to lead common country assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes. The 17-member United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality, which UNIFEM chairs, produced an agreed set of performance indicators on gender equality for United Nations country teams endorsed by Group members and distributed by the Chair of the Group to all resident coordinators.

C. Area 3
Accountability, risk and oversight

54. In 2008, UNIFEM addressed the management issues of accountability, risk and oversight by strengthening its capacity to track results and continuing the phased delegation of authority of operational and programmatic business processes from headquarters to subregional offices and from headquarters operations to headquarters geographic and thematic sections.

55. The groundwork has been laid for a computerized results-based tracking system to strengthen internal capacity for planning and institutional development. Two operations and programme capacity-building workshops were held, in which 85 staff members from national and subregional offices participated. Post-workshop assessments demonstrate that capacity-building efforts are resulting in greater efficiency and improved quality. UNIFEM is decentralizing its strategic functions while strengthening its monitoring and auditing capacity, instituting, for example, internal control frameworks in each of its 15 subregional offices. In addition, 9 subregional offices were audited in 2007-2008. An audit risk model for UNIFEM has been developed to guide and prioritize internal audits.

D. Area 4
Administrative, human and financial capacities

56. This output area tracks the extent to which UNIFEM has the administrative, human and financial capacities to respond to requests for technical expertise and financial support. UNIFEM strengthened its financial systems in 2008 by upgrading to Atlas 9.0 and introducing a system to link financial data with programme and project results in Atlas; and prepared to introduce the International Public Sector Accounting Standards on 1 January 2010. UNIFEM is putting systems in place to track the length of time that administrative and human-resource actions require, with the goal of improving both timeliness and quality.

57. In 2008, UNIFEM continued to receive financial contributions from bilateral donors, as well as non-traditional donors, including national committees, private foundations and the private sector. Contributions from national committees increased by nearly 200 per cent. Increasingly strong partnerships with private sector and foundation partners resulted in $4.6 million in contributions.

E. Gaps and challenges

58. While the tracking of performance against the UNIFEM management results framework registered progress in 2008, first-year reporting and review suggest that systems and knowledge should be enhanced to improve performance in a number of areas:

(a) UNIFEM will respond to gaps identified by strengthening documentation/guidance on the "how to" of advocacy for gender equality; more rigorously evaluating catalytic initiatives to stimulate replication; and developing an explicit UNIFEM strategy on capacity development;

(b) UNIFEM needs to invest in cost-benefit analyses of its role in United Nations coordination and reform mechanisms in order to increase the knowledge of where financial and human resources are most effectively invested; develop a strategy to prioritize engagement in the 90 countries implementing United Nations development assistance frameworks for 2009-2011; and work with United Nations organizations to support the "delivering as one" pilot countries to deliver on gender equality and continuously assess progress;

(c) While there has been notable progress on the delegation of authority to subregional offices in operational areas, there is a corresponding need for greater clarity and investment in oversight quality assurance and risk management. The annual report documents progress in risk management, including audit and follow-up, but responsibilities, accountabilities and standardized systems and procedures for oversight need to be prioritized;

(d) UNIFEM needs improved reporting and tracking of quality of performance and timeliness of procurement, recruitments and donor reporting.

V. Integrated resources framework

59. UNIFEM increased its total contributions by 18 per cent in 2008, with total resources received amounting to $121 million, including regular (core) resources of $51 million, and contributions to UNIFEM trust funds of $5 million. Core resources exceeded projections by $5 million, or 10 per cent, and other (non-core) resources exceeded projections by $38 million, or over 100 per cent. In 2008, UNIFEM instituted the practice of reporting separately on the UNIFEM-administered United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, which received $18.3 million (compared with $15.9 million the previous year). Late in December, UNIFEM received a $65 million contribution from the Government of Spain to launch a new "gender-equality fund". Total UNIFEM resources grew despite the worldwide economic crisis and losses due to exchange-rate fluctuations that increased the value of the dollar, particularly against the euro and other currencies of main donors.

60. The number of countries contributing to regular and other UNIFEM resources increased from 49 in 2007 to 80 in 2008. Contributions from UNIFEM national committees increased in 2008 by 191 per cent over 2007. Those contributions, amounting to more than $1.2 million (including a contribution of $772,960 from the Icelandic National Committee), demonstrate that there is potential to increase contributions from those and other non-traditional donors as part of the UNIFEM emphasis on diversifying its donor base, which is also reflected in the resource mobilization framework, 2008-2011.

61. Expenditures of regular resources in 2008 amounted to $42.3 million, representing an increase of $20.9 million — almost double expenditure and delivery in the previous year. UNIFEM delivered 80 per cent of regular resources by the fourth quarter of 2008. Its total expenditures for 2008 (regular and other resources) reached $93 million, an increase of $28.7 million, or 44 per cent, over the 2007 total of $64.3 million. The percentage of delivery for cost-sharing resources was lower — 66 per cent — due to receipt of nearly 50 per cent of all cost-sharing resources in the third and fourth quarters of 2008.

VI. Recommendations

62. The UNIFEM Consultative Committee, which comprises five Member States (Estonia, Chile, the Republic of Korea, Norway and the Sudan) appointed by the President of the General Assembly, provides key recommendations to the organization each year. At its forty-ninth session on 17 and 18 March 2009, during which it reviewed the work of the Fund in 2008, the Committee made the following recommendations:

The Committee welcomed the appointment of the Executive Director and expressed great appreciation to the Executive Director and the staff of UNIFEM for their work in the past year and made the following recommendations, designed to enhance the Fund's programming and organizational effectiveness.

The UNIFEM Consultative Committee:

1. *Emphasizes* that UNIFEM is an essential component of the United Nations gender architecture, recommends that UNIFEM continue to be actively involved in the processes leading to a stronger and more coherent United Nations architecture for gender equality and empowerment of women, and in this respect welcomes General Assembly resolution 62/277, which, inter alia, aims at taking substantive action in this regard during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly;

2. While *commending* the new reporting format, requests that UNIFEM continue to report to it annually on the strategic plan, emphasizing the links between the inputs, outputs and outcomes and lessons learned, and tracking progress against the baseline according to the key results and indicators, including how it has utilized the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a basis for programming, and further commends ongoing efforts to ensure complementarity in the implementation of the strategic plans of UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF;

3. *Welcomes* the Fund's ongoing active participation in the One United Nations pilots to ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated and encourages its contribution to the evaluation of the "delivering as one" initiatives;

4. *Encourages* UNIFEM to continue to cooperate with all relevant United Nations entities to further promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, continues to believe that UNIFEM should participate in the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and especially recommends that UNIFEM be granted access to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to make an input from the gender-equality perspective;

5. *Encourages* UNIFEM to actively participate in the processes of the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 10-year review of the Millennium Development Goals and the 30-year review of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women with a view to providing input on the basis of its experience;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the Fund's input into the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and encourages UNIFEM to actively participate in the follow-up to the outcomes of the Commission, as appropriate;

7. *Commends* the Fund's leadership of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Task Team on Gender Equality in the development and adoption of the Group's performance indicators for United Nations country teams, welcomes the Fund's work as the Chair of the United Nations Development Group working group on policy issues and encourages UNIFEM to continue to contribute to the strengthening of the United Nations country team coordinated support to countries to advance gender equality and women's empowerment;

8. *Encourages* UNIFEM to continue its work in supporting the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security;

9. *Welcomes* the gender-equality perspective in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, and encourages UNIFEM to continue to play an active role in the United Nations financing for development process;

10. *Recognizes* the impact of the financial and economic crisis on women and girls, and encourages UNIFEM to be an advocate for a gender perspective in the response of the United Nations development system to the crisis;

11. *Encourages* UNIFEM to continue to strengthen its work in support of gender-responsive budgeting;

12. *Further encourages* UNIFEM to continue cooperation with relevant regional organizations and looks forward to the first report of the assessment of this collaboration at an upcoming intersessional meeting in 2009;

13. *Welcomes* the continuing work of the UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassadors and takes note with appreciation of the positive impact of their activities;

14. *Commends* the Fund's ongoing advocacy campaign "Say NO to Violence against Women" in support of the Secretary-General's multi-year campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" and its participation in other inter-agency coordination efforts to end violence against women;

15. *Commends* UNIFEM for having surpassed the projections identified for resource mobilization in 2008 and the expansion of its partnerships with bilateral donors, civil society and private sector partners, and encourages the Fund to continue to broaden its resource base and to seek stronger partnerships in order to meet the resource mobilization targets in its strategic plan, 2008-2011;

16. *Recommends* that the Executive Director exercise the option to reduce up to a maximum of three percentage points from the percentage share in regular (core) resources of any under-delivering programme category or geographic region and reallocate the same amount to better performing geographic regions and categories, as appropriate, while ensuring compliance with the approved resource allocation over time;

17. *Requests* UNIFEM to provide an analysis of the criteria for resource allocation for a review of these by the Consultative Committee at an intersessional meeting and its inclusion as an annex to the report on the implementation of the strategic plan for the annual session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board;

18. *Recommends* that the UNIFEM Executive Director be able to exercise her authority to approve UNIFEM programme and project amounts in line with the delegated authority within UNDP and in accordance with the instrument of delegation of authority to the UNIFEM Executive Director issued by the UNDP Administrator;

19. *Notes with appreciation* the establishment of the Fund for Gender Equality and looks forward to its effective operation;

20. *Acknowledges* the work of UNIFEM as manager of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women and emphasizes the importance of retaining its open nature and competitive process for selecting grantees;

21. *Decides* to convene intersessional meetings in 2009 as needed.